

Narrowing the gap for disadvantaged pupils in English, through effective school leadership, quality first teaching and Teaching Assistant deployment and development.

Overview

The project aim is to work from EYFS through to KS3 to improve outcomes for disadvantaged students in English. This will be done working across three strands: school leadership, classroom teaching and the deployment of teaching assistants.

The project uses an evidence informed approach to improve the client school's approach to the teaching of reading and writing. The project aims to increase teachers' grammatical subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in teaching reading, writing and oracy and increase collaborative working. It will work with teachers from identified schools to develop their understanding of the pedagogy behind the effective teaching of reading, writing and oracy across the curriculum, leading to improved outcomes in reading and writing for children in KS2 and KS3.

Our aim is to develop a high performing team of cross phase lead practitioners in schools, providing sustainable capacity to improve outcomes for disadvantaged learners in reading and writing. We will then grow a network of leaders and Lead Practitioners across the region through the MAT, Diocese and TSA, to ensure transfer-ability of best practice. We seek to drive an engine room of school improvement in schools to effect lasting change on a greater scale in the region over time.

Our project for round 3 is a replication of our successful round 1 bid, amended based on learning so far from round 1. These amendments include using a train the trainer model so that teacher and TA CPD can be delivered in a more bespoke manner and on a hub, or even individual school basis if necessary. Also upskilling our in-house Lead Practitioners and Specialist Leaders of Education so that they can play an active role in delivery, evaluation and support of elements of the project. Through this project we are seeking to build capacity within the locality in the engagement of evidence based practice and help establish research at the heart of self-sustaining school improvement practices.

Good practice to share with others interested in running school improvement projects to ensure projects deliver the intended outcome.

- Evidence and research based CPD linked directly to teaching and learning.
- Dedicated Project Leader able to: monitor schools throughout the duration of the project, ensure understanding, solve problems, adapt strategies and ensure all project strands were being implemented.
- Project communication must be with Headteacher/SLT link as well as designated school project leads, to ensure whole school approach to

- the project.
- Leadership and middle leader support through SLE/LLE time given to each school as part of the project was invaluable. This ensured the school environment was conducive to good implementation and expert coaching and mentoring offering peer to peer collaboration was in place.
 - Schools given the autonomy to choose their own focus e.g. the specific problem they wanted to solve, using evidence and CPD, this ensured their focus fitted their school context.

What the project may do differently in the future

The project must be launched through a formal launch event which targets Headteachers and key staff of all schools involved. This is the start of the implementation process, which is planned in stages, not just a series of one-off events. This launch should also ensure the main outcomes of the project are shared in explicit, up front training. The SLT of each school must be involved in the launch and continued monitoring of the project progress.

Key elements, dates and expectations of being involved in the Project should be shared explicitly in the initial stages. The creation of a Project Handbook was extremely useful for this, as was an MOU to be signed by each participating school.

It may be more sensible to allow schools to select their own parental engagement tool (e.g. Tapestry, Marvellous Me, Seesaw etc.) as this approach may increase take up of the subscription in schools/with parents, rather than the project selecting one parental engagement tool for all schools.

Sustainability measures taken by projects to ensure improvement are sustained beyond the funding period.

- The Headteacher from each school attended a launch event which involved input based around the EEF's School's guide to implementation.
- All schools created an implementation action plan to continue beyond the end date of the project.
- Project actions were included in school development plans, to ensure sustainability at school level, beyond the Project end date.
- Where possible licenses provided by the Project (e.g. Seesaw) were purchased for a longer time period than that of the Project, to allow for sustainability beyond the Project end date.
- The Project Leader met with Headteacher and Project lead in each school to discuss sustainability of Project work, beyond the end date of the project.
- Peer to Peer support, across the schools involved was actively encouraged, to ensure networks were created and continued after the end date of the project.

- Feedback and evaluation summaries given to the CPD provider (Teaching school) to ensure that CPD programmes can be adapted for future participants.
- Post Project booklet was created to share evaluation, impact and outcomes with other relevant organisations.
- LLEs and SLEs who were based close to the supported schools were utilised to provide support, thus creating sustainable partnerships and support networks which could easily be utilised past the end project date.